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# Downtown Master Plan Study

*Lincoln, Nebraska*

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“Downtown is the region’s economic, civic, and cultural hub, Lincoln’s gathering place and the first choice for employment, education, entertainment, and urban living.”

❑ **What Is A Downtown Master Plan (and Master Planning Process)?**

- ◆ Represents a “Comprehensive Plan” for a specific geographic area
- ◆ Acts like a marketing device for Downtown
- ◆ Crafts a preferred pattern of land uses
- ◆ Identifies key market niches for economic growth
- ◆ Presents a blueprint for the physical development of the area
- ◆ Outlines capital improvement needs and priorities
- ◆ Sets forth urban design principles and practices
- ◆ Specifies management strategies and institutional relationships
- ◆ Describes the fiscal strategies for accomplishing stated development goals

❑ **Why Should We Pursue A Master Plan Now?**

- A Downtown Plan is long overdue (30 years and 4 City-Co Comp Plans)
- Significant changes in our office, retail, service, & housing sectors
- Recently adopted Comp Plan needs integration with Downtown Vision
- Provide a “quick response capability” for meeting new opportunities
- Help affirm long term relationship between DLA and City
- Position Downtown to face capital improvement funding challenges
- Capture momentum of entertainment complex and other new projects
- Solidify the identity (a.k.a., “branding”) of Downtown
- Illuminate relationship with Downtown fringe areas
- Timing – The past is past and now is now

❑ **How Does Master Plan Differ from Recent Planning Efforts?**

- ▲ Offers broader scope & vision -- time frame, geographic area, function, etc.
- ▲ Builds upon past efforts and integrates them into a coherent package
- ▲ Recognizes that “Everything depends on everything else”

## **Downtown's Recent Planning History**

Downtown Lincoln has a rich legacy of planning. The most recent planning efforts for the Downtown area include:

- ◆ Lincoln Center Master Plan (1974) - This was Downtown Lincoln's first master planning effort -- and in many ways its only true comprehensive look at Downtown as a growth and development area. The Plan identified a development strategy for Downtown involving several development districts, vehicular and pedestrian circulation approaches, parking needs, open space and landscape strategies, and proposals for transit service programs.
- ◆ Update to 1974 Plan (1985) - This study updated the earlier 1974 Plan and chartered a course to move Downtown from a regional retail center to a mixed use center.
- ◆ StarVenture (1988) - This community strategic planning endeavor targeted a number of near term goals and programs including the strengthening of Downtown's role as a major activity center.
- ◆ Downtown Master Plan Supplement (1989) - This study supplemented and updated the 1985 Downtown Plan. It identified opportunities for projects involving retail, mixed use, office, entertainment, convention center space, housing, and hotels.
- ◆ Downtown 2001 - The Heart of the City (1996) - This endeavor targeted 40 strategies within five major goal areas for near term implementation. Ten imperative projects were identified to facilitate key development efforts.
- ◆ Investment Strategy for a Competitive Downtown (1998) - This work identified important investment opportunities to guide public and private expenditures in the Downtown. Major projects included the redevelopment of the Old Federal Building, enhancement of the theater district, revitalization of the Lincoln Benefit Life Building, and addressing Haymarket concerns including parking, loft housing and mix use redevelopment projects. The projects identified in this effort have all be completed or are currently being implemented.